

Call for Contributions

Germany and its Images in World Exhibitions

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The very first World Exhibition, held in London in 1851, presented industry as a thriving sector, a dreamworld offering man endless possibilities. This theme was a constant in subsequent Exhibitions, culminating in the Paris Exhibition of 1900, which represented a new highpoint for technological achievement. It was at this time, between 1880 and 1914, that Germany sought to impose itself as an industrial giant. By the time of the Exhibition of 1904, held in the American city of St Louis¹, German industrialists were working harder than ever to achieve recognition from their peers around the world. Although German industrial output first overtook that of its competitors in 1990, the country had to wait until 2000 to hold its own World Exhibition. In the hundred years separating those two dates, Paris held no fewer than six such Exhibitions. And yet, with rare exceptions, Germany took an active part in each World Exhibition.

The Nazi pavilion of 1937, located opposite the Soviet pavilion at the Trocadero, was undoubtedly the most striking of all. This was, however, the only time that the German state took control of the design of its pavilion. On all other occasions, it was German firms which financed the building of the country's pavilion, in order to draw attention to themselves. The lack of involvement of the German state itself in the design of successive German pavilions is no doubt one of the main reasons why there exists no scholarly work dedicated to the history of German participation in the World Exhibitions (in stark contrast with the situation regarding France, for example). But what makes this question even more interesting is the fact that during all this time the German state had no clear, stable definition of itself as a state. Which Germany would she have shown to the world? The fragmented Germany that existed before the creation of the German Confederation in 1866, the Second Reich of Bismarck and William II, the Weimar Republic, Nazi Germany of the Third Reich, the divided Germany of the Cold War era, or the reunited Germany of the 21st century?

Drawing on the growing scholarly literature on exhibitions and the representation of national identity², this volume will examine the different ways in which Germany sought to represent itself at these Exhibitions, as well as the ways in which these representations were themselves perceived by visitors and commentators from those countries which took part in, and organised the Exhibitions themselves. The different chapters will contribute towards a better understanding of the role Germany saw itself playing in the world community of industrialised nations. In this respect, they will build on the work of scholars such as Abigail Green who has studied the Exhibitions between 1851 and 1862³, a time when Germany was only unified in the economic sense (and even then only partially), thanks to the Zollverein⁴.

¹ Séverine Antigone MARIN, "L'américanisation du monde? Etude des peurs allemandes face au 'danger américain' (1897-1907)", D. BARJOT, I. LESCENT-GILLES, M. DE FERRIÈRE LE VAYER (ed), *L'américanisation en Europe au XXe siècle : économie, culture, politique, Americanisation in the 20th Europe : Economics, Culture, Politics, Vol 1*, Lille, Centre de Recherche sur l'Histoire de l'Europe du Nord-Ouest, Université Lille 3, 2002, p. 71-92

² DEMEULENAERE-DOUYÈRE Christiane, PEREZ Liliane (ed), *Les expositions universelles : les identités au défi de la modernité* : [colloque, Paris, 05 juin 2012], Rennes, PUR, 2014,

³ GREEN Abigail, "Representing Germany? The Zollverein at the World Exhibition, 1851-1862", in *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 75, No. 4 (December 2003), pp. 836-863

⁴ Le Zollverein, créé le 1^{er} janvier 1834, est une union douanière à laquelle adhérait la grande majorité des Etats allemands à l'exception de l'Autriche

The contributions will also contrast the position Germany sought to occupy and the different reactions of visitors to the pavilions, visitors who themselves came from a broad variety of political contexts. The volume will also shed light on the reasons why, and the ways in which Germany was able to impose itself on the world stage as a great industrial power, at a time when it was not a great political power.

Contributions of between 3,500 and 5,000 characters (including spaces) should be sent by 6 November 2015 to the following email address: pcohen-avenel@u-paris10.fr. If accepted for publication, the deadline for final versions is 30 April 2016. Contributions may be written in German or in English.

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